



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

July 1, 1999

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Office of the Governor
Carson City, NV

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

Thank you for your May 12, 1999, letter concerning the transportation of low-level radioactive waste through California from Department of Energy sites to the Nevada Test Site. We are actively addressing the routing of low-level radioactive waste shipments with stakeholders and representatives from the States along existing and proposed transportation corridors.

The Department of Energy ships its low-level radioactive waste using commercial companies (carriers). The carriers, in compliance with Department of Transportation regulations, are responsible for selecting routes that limit radiological risks. Risk analysis considers population density, accident rates, and transit times. The Department offers carriers, States, and other stakeholders access to departmental resources to conduct risk analysis and routing studies.

The Nevada congressional delegation, the Governor, and stakeholders have expressed concern regarding transportation of low-level radioactive waste through the densely populated Las Vegas Valley and the heavily traveled Hoover Dam bypass corridor. To address these concerns, the Department requested that carriers reevaluate routes for waste generated at the Fernald Site, a cleanup site near Cincinnati, Ohio. The response from the carriers identified four alternate routes to transport the waste from Fernald, Ohio, to the Nevada Test Site. Two routes approach the Nevada Test Site from the north and two from the south (see Enclosures 1 and 2).

One of the southern routes identified by one of the Fernald carriers is California State Route 127. Based on the input we received from carriers, it is doubtful that State Route 127 will be used for any significant portion of waste shipments from Fernald. Carriers, however, are using State Route 127 for waste shipments originating in California.



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